

Chapter 18

Fuels Management/Prescribed Fire

A. Introduction

The Fuels Management Programs within the Department of the Interior (DOI) and the Forest Service have the purpose of reducing risks to human communities and improving the health of the land. To ensure these programs are coordinated, common priorities for fuel treatments have been established which follow these guidelines.

1. Complement federal land stewardship responsibilities by providing a fuels treatment program that can be realistically implemented.
2. Represent a collaborative, efficient, and effective program necessary to reduce the wildland fire risk to both communities and the environment.
3. Expand fuels treatment program capabilities and biomass utilization markets.

The DOI and USDA-FS along with other federal, state, tribal, and local partners will work collaboratively to ensure effective fuels treatment efforts are planned and implemented. These efforts will be consistent with the direction provided in:

1. **USDA/DOI** “*Restoring Fire -Adapted Ecosystems on Federal Lands- A Cohesive Strategy*” (Federal Cohesive Strategy)
2. **USDA-FS/DOI/Western Governors Association** “*A Collaborative Approach for Reducing Wildland Fire Risks to Communities and the Environment- 10 Year Comprehensive Strategy*” (10 Year Comprehensive Strategy)

The following chapter outlines the similarities in fuels management between the DOI agencies and the USDA Forest Service. However, there exist some programmatic differences that are identified in the following agency specific documentation and serve as agency specific direction.

1. **BLM-** Refer to (IM No. OF&A 2002-027) for specific agency direction.
2. **FWS-** Refer to Fire Management Handbook for specific agency direction.
3. **NPS-** Refer to RM 18 for specific agency direction.

4. *USFS- Refer to FSM 5140 and The Wildland and Prescribed Fire Management Policy-Implementation Procedures Reference Guide for specific agency direction.*

This agency specific direction will be referenced throughout this chapter as “Refer to agency specific direction.” Any different specific direction reference will be noted.

B. Policy

1. The safety of firefighters and the public is the number one priority when planning and implementing fuels treatment projects.
2. All prescribed fire projects will have an approved prescribed fire plan prior to ignition.
3. All prescribed fire plans will contain measurable objectives, a predetermined prescription, and an escaped fire plan to be implemented in the event of an escape.
4. All prescribed fire plans will contain the required elements as outline in the agency policy.
5. All fuels treatment projects will be in compliance with NEPA requirements.
6. All fuels management projects will be tracked and progress will be reported within required timeframes. Impediments to the completion of the projects will be identified and actions will be taken to mitigate the impediment.
7. All fuels treatment projects will be monitored to determine if treatment objectives were met and evaluation reports completed and maintained in the project file. All fuels treatment projects will support resource management objectives as identified in the Land Use Plans.
8. Refer to agency specific direction.

C. Priorities

1. The agencies will strategically focus fuels treatment activities as identified in the Fire Management Plan by placing priority on:
 - a. **Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) Areas** -- These areas currently have two accepted definitions:
 - 1) “The urban Wildland interface community exists where humans and their development meet or intermix with wildland fuel.” This definition is found in the *Federal Register*/Vol. 66, No. 3/Thursday, January 4, 2001/Notices; and *A Fire in the West, The Wildland/Urban Interface Fire Problem A Report for the Western States Fire Managers*, September 18, 2000.
 - 2) “The line, area, or zone where structures and other human development meet or intermingle with undeveloped wildland or vegetative fuel.” This definition is found in the NWCG Glossary and the *10-Year Comprehensive Strategy Implementation Plan*.
 - b. WUI fuel reduction projects mitigate the risks to people, their communities, and adjacent resource values important to the social/economic stability of those communities from unwanted wildland fire. The National Interagency Fuels Coordination Group has defined valid WUI fuel treatment projects as those projects that meet the following criteria:
 - 1) They must focus on communities at risk that are published in the *Federal Register* or are identified as future communities by local collaborative efforts.
 - 2) They must be adjacent or in close proximity to federal lands where there is a risk of fire originating on federal lands and threatening life and community property.
 - 3) They must have a completed fire risk assessment and mitigation strategy, or be in the process of developing one, through collaborative efforts with interagency partners.
 - 4) They must implement the fire mitigation strategy.
2. Natural Resource Areas where actions will improve the resiliency and sustainability of wildland ecosystems to benefit and maintain: water quality, air quality, wildlife and fisheries habitat, and threatened, endangered, or other special status plant and animal species or habitat.
3. Areas where actions will reduce risks and damage from a wildfire. This includes the reintroduction of fire into fire dependant ecosystems to maintain and enhance those ecosystems and the modification of vegetation to achieve specific land management objectives.

D. Project Planning, Selection, and Tracking**1. Planning**

Hazardous Fuels Treatment activities are a coordinated interdisciplinary effort supported by Resource and Fire Management. All participating disciplines will coordinate their respective roles for the planning, implementation, monitoring, evaluation, reporting, and funding of fuels treatment projects. Resource Management is responsible for managing vegetation and soils. Fire Management is responsible for identifying hazardous fuel situations and managing mitigation activities.

All use of fuels treatments and prescribed fire will support land and resource management plans. The agency specific land management plans serve as the document to initiate, analyze, and provide the basis for conducting fuels treatment activities and using prescribed fire to meet resource objectives.

The Fire Management Plan (FMP) serves as the program strategy document for fuels treatments and prescribed fire activities. The FMP captures and quantifies the overall fuels management program needs of the field office. The FMP identifies how fuels treatments and prescribed fire, along with other fire management strategies, will be used to meet the overall land management goals identified in land use plans.

Compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) is required for all fuels treatment projects. As per Public Law 95-95, compliance with federal, state, and local air quality regulations is mandatory and will require coordination with state and local air quality authorities. Personnel developing Fuels Treatment and Prescribed Fire Plans must be aware of state and local regulations and the impacts that a specific project may have on critical areas. Prescribed Fire and Fuels Treatment Plans need to identify sensitive areas and provide operational guidance to mitigate potential impacts from smoke or other particulates. Follow appropriate state and local requirements regarding smoke dispersion modeling.

2. Fuel Treatment Selection Process

The following table illustrates the process steps, responsible organizational levels, and associated timeframes involved in the fuel treatment program development and collaboration process agreed to by the Forest Service and DOI bureaus. This process does not circumvent any agency specific budget processes, which are documented in other memoranda particular to each agency. All

agencies have synchronized the critical steps and agree on the criteria to be used in program development.

Refer to agency specific direction and (Interdepartmental Memo dated March 20, 2002 titled Fuels Treatment Development and Collaboration Process)

Forest Service and DOI Fuels Treatment Selection Process		
Process Steps	Responsibility	Timeframe (Due Date)
<p>DOI Bureau and Forest Service Regional allocations of hazardous fuel reduction funds are determined annually at the national level. Distributions are based on criteria from the Federal Cohesive Strategy and include but may not be limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Fire management workload; b. Departure from historical fuel conditions and fire occurrence; c. Risk to communities (for wildland/urban interface projects); d. Risk to ecosystems; e. Benefits that extend beyond treatment areas; f. Potential for unwanted wildland fire to cause irreversible damage to communities; ecosystems, or historical and cultural resources; g. Projects that span multiple agency and ownership boundaries with broad interagency as well as non-governmental organizations and community participation; h. Multi-year projects based on current land use and fire management plans, collaboration with federal, state, and tribal interagency partners, and 	<p>Department of the Interior/Office of Wildland Fire Coordination (OWFC) staff, Forest Service Fire and Aviation Management staff, bureau offices in consultation with National Office level - Bureau Directors, FS and DOI Fuel Treatment Coordinators, FS and DOI Budget Coordinators</p>	<p>During the next and all future fiscal year budget development cycles</p>

i. Prior performance in the hazardous fuels program.		
Adjusts database to reflect current fiscal year allocation and program emphasis.	States/ Regional Offices/	4/1 current year
Field units develop outyear fuels program estimates.	Regional Offices/National Forests	5/1 each year
Forest Service and DOI bureaus will develop and maintain a list of fuels treatment cooperators/partners that have engaged in the project selection process in each state. List will be submitted to the DOI OWFC and FS Fire & Aviation Management.	FS and DOI Fuel Treatment Coordinators with support from Regional/State Fuels Coordinators	5/15 each year
DOI bureaus will indicate approximate number of acres of fuels to be treated in the budget out-year (current FY +2 years) for use in developing departmental budget guidance and budget justifications (e.g. 5/30/03 provide # acres to be treated FY05).	Bureau Directors/DOI Fuel Treatment Coordinators submit to OWFC	5/30 each year
Forest Service and DOI bureau field units and tribes, in collaboration with local level partners, enter new single-year and new or continuing multi-year fuel treatment projects in NFPORS. The list of projects represents potential treatments for the next fiscal year based on the President's Budget, has been prioritized locally, and will be submitted to Regional/State offices. Priority considerations for local project development and prioritization will be based on the Federal Cohesive Strategy and local issues (refer to priority criteria in Federal Cohesive Strategy).	Local Level cooperators	7/1/current year

Forest Service and DOI Regional/State Offices, in consultation with states, tribes, and local partners, prioritize projects, consolidate lists, and submit consolidated package for their area of responsibility to national offices. Priority considerations for project development and prioritization will be based on the Federal Cohesive Strategy (refer to priority criteria in Federal Cohesive Strategy).	Regional/State Offices, cooperators	8/1/current year
DOI Bureau Directors submit proposed new project list to Department of the Interior; Forest Service National Office compiles project list for next fiscal year. This proposed project list serves as the initial DOI and Forest Service input to Budget Year Action and Financial Plan.	National Offices – Bureau Directors, Forest Service Chief	9/1/current year
DOI National Offices utilize Federal Cohesive Strategy priorities for distributing wildland-urban interface and hazardous fuel treatment funds and establish Bureau regional/state budget caps, dependent upon budget approval and/or Department direction for implementation. Priority considerations for project development and prioritization will be based on the Federal Cohesive Strategy (refer to priority criteria in Federal Cohesive Strategy).	Bureau Directors, National Offices – Fuel Treatment Coordinators	Completed after budget approved.
DOI Bureaus make preliminary budget allocations to the Regions and States.	National Office – Bureau Directors	9/8 current year based on Congressional action to date. Subject to change upon final Congressional appropriations.

DOI Bureau Regional/State offices make fund allocation decisions for new fiscal year projects within their defined budget caps.	Regional/State Offices	9/15/current fiscal year based on Congressional action to date. Subject to change upon final Congressional appropriations.
Forest Service and DOI Bureaus issue official budget allocations to regions and states.	National Offices – Bureau Directors, Forest Service Chief	For DOI Bureaus - upon apportionment of appropriation by the OMB. FS and DOI budget offices will give budget policy guidance upon completion of Congressional appropriation. Forest Service – Hazardous fuels budget allocations are transmitted as part of total FS budget program direction.
DOI administrative units/local groups get new funding allocations and Performance Measure Targets.	Local Level cooperators	Upon apportionment of appropriation by OMB.
Initiate priority project implementation.	Local level cooperators	10/1 new fiscal year
Administrative units adjust planned program in NFPORS to reflect budget allocation.	Local/State/Regional	30 days after notification from National Office
National offices compile final Funded Project List (provide as final input to current fiscal year Action and Financial Plans).	National Office – Bureau Directors, Fuel Treatment Coordinators	Upon apportionment of appropriation by OMB. Transmitted 30 days after final budget.

DOI Bureaus develop complete list of carryover projects that could not be implemented from previous fiscal year.	Local level cooperators, Regional/State Offices, National Offices – Bureau Directors, Fuel Treatment Coordinators	10/15
Forest Service and DOI compile previous fiscal year accomplishments (input to End of Year Report).	Regional/State Offices, National Offices	11/1 current year
If DOI projects cannot be implemented, the local level with cooperators will recommend a substitute project or carrying the existing project until a later date. If funds need to be shifted (within units, between units, between regions, or between bureaus), the Regional/State Offices will be notified and decisions will be made by Bureau Directors at the National level. If FS projects cannot be implemented, changes will be made at field level, and database adjusted.	Input and communication from all levels. Decisions regarding fund re-distribution or movement made by Bureau Directors. FS local level	Ongoing
DOI local administrative units, tribes, and other cooperators track project status and report to Regional/State Offices on status monthly.	Local Level cooperators	Ongoing – monthly reports
DOI Regional/State offices monitor accomplishment milestones and support increased implementation when needed, identify need for fund transfers when needed, and keep national offices informed of projects status.	Regional/State Offices	Ongoing – monthly
Units ensure that data in NFPORS is current.	Local/State/Regional/	Ongoing - monthly

E. Tracking and Reporting

Accountability (for monies spent and results achieved) is expected and closely monitored from within and outside the departments. The Wildland Fire Leadership Council has established NFPORS as the required

Release Date: January 2004

interagency system to assist field, state, regional, and national personnel in managing and reporting accomplishments for work conducted under the National Fire Plan.

1. National Fire Plan Operations and Reporting System (NFPORS)

The Hazardous Fuels module of the system has been developed and is the national interagency standard for:

- a. Submitting proposed projects for funding,
- b. Tracking and managing the program,
- c. Reporting performance, measuring accomplishments and accountability.

2. Fuels Management Performance Measures

The fuels management targets and accomplishments to be tracked are defined as:

- a. Total number of acres treated both in the WUI and Hazardous Fuels all condition classes
- b. Total number of acres treated in the WUI
- c. Total number of acres treated in condition classes 2 or 3 in fire regimes 1,2,3 outside the WUI
- d. Total number of acres treated /total cost
- e. Total number of RX fires conducted that result in violations/total # of RX fire treatments
- f. Total number of acres treated in condition class 2 moved to condition class 1
- g. Total number of acres treated in condition class 3 moved to condition class 1 or 2
- h. Total number of acres moved to a better condition class per million dollars of gross investment
- i. Number of acres treated by mechanical methods
- j. Number of acres treated mechanically with by-products utilized
- k. Number of projects implemented through (local) contractors
- l. Number of communities at risk with completed risk assessments and mitigation plans/ total number of communities listed
- m. Total number of WUI communities at risk with fire prevention programs in place/total number listed
- n. Number of WUI communities at risk that initiated volunteer, community funded, or cost-share efforts to reduce hazardous fuels.
- o. Refer to agency specific direction.
- p. *FWS – Refer to FIREBASE for specific agency direction.*

F. Prescribed Fire Plans

1. Plan Contents

The Prescribed Fire Plan is a stand alone document that provides the Prescribed Fire Burn Boss all the information needed to implement the project. Prescribed fire projects must be implemented in compliance with the written plan. At a minimum, a listing of the required elements to develop a burn plan can be found in all the agency specific direction documents:

- a. Refer to agency specific direction.
- b. **BLM** – Refer to *BLM IM OF&A No. 2002-027*.

2. Restrictions

Implementation of Prescribed Fires at National Preparedness Levels 4 and 5 is restricted. (See the *National Mobilization Guide*.)

- a. **At Preparedness Level 4:** WFU and prescribed fire application can be continued or be initiated if the proposed action is approved by an agency at the regional or state office level. This approval must be based on an assessment of risk, impacts of the proposed actions on area resources and activities and include feedback from the Geographic Area MAC Group. The Geographic Area MAC Group provides information or perspective to agencies wishing to proceed with or implement a WFU or prescribed fire application. The final decision to implement resides with the implementing agency.
- b. **At Preparedness Level 5:** WFU and prescribed fire application can be continued or be initiated if the proposed action is approved by an agency at the regional or state office level. The national agency representative will assess risk and impacts of the proposed action and discuss with the National MAC Group. This group will have the opportunity to provide information or perspective to agencies wishing to proceed with or implement a WFU or prescribed fire application. The final decision to implement resides with the implementing agency.

G. Determination of Complexity

The NWCG *Prescribed Fire Complexity Rating System Guide* is the agency standard for rating prescribed fire complexity. A complexity rating will be completed for each prescribed fire project. The determination of the prescribed fire complexity will be based on an assessment of risk (the probability or likelihood of an unexpected event or situation occurring), and technical difficulty (the level of skills needed to complete the project and deal with expected events).

1. *NPS- Refer to RM 1, chapter 10 for specific agency direction.*
2. *BLM – Refer to BLM IM OF&A No. 2002-027.*

H. Safety and Qualifications

1. Safety Awareness

All personnel will be briefed prior to any prescribed fire assignment. The briefing will ensure that all people involved understand how the project will be implemented and what their assignments are. Briefings must cover safety considerations for both known site specific hazards and potential hazards. A briefing checklist must be developed and attached to the Prescribed Fire Plan. A briefing will be given for each operational period of multi-period projects.

A Job Hazard Analysis (JHA) will be completed for each prescribed fire project and attached to each Prescribed Fire Plan.

2. Safety Equipment

All personnel on a prescribed fire project will be equipped with required PPE appropriate to their position or as identified in a JHA. For holding and ignition personnel the minimum PPE (unless otherwise identified in the JHA) is the same as that required for wildland fire assignments. (See Chapter 06, Safety.)

3. Smoke Exposure

Exposure to smoke during prescribed fire operations can be a significant safety concern. Research has shown that exposure to smoke on prescribed fires, especially in the holding and ignition positions, often exceeds that on wildfires.

- a. **Planning:** Smoke exposure must be considered when planning prescribed fires. Altering line locations can have a significant impact on smoke exposure. Placing fire lines in areas of lighter fuels, or moving lines to roads or other barriers that will require less holding, patrol, and mop up, will significantly reduce the smoke exposure to personnel. The identification of “Buffer or Allowable Areas” (where fire outside the main control line may not need to be aggressively attacked) is a good method to reduce smoke exposure.
- b. **Implementation:** Techniques that can help reduce the exposure of personnel to smoke:
 - 1) Rotating people out of the heaviest smoke area may be the most effective method of limiting smoke exposure.
 - 2) Changing firing patterns and pre-burning (black lining) during less severe conditions can greatly reduce exposure to smoke.

- 3) The use of retardant, foam, or sprinklers can also significantly reduce the workload and exposure time for holding crews.

4. Qualifications

The NWCG *Wildland and Prescribed Fire Qualification System Guide (PMS 310-1)* establishes minimum prescribed fire qualification and training standards for all agencies and provides a complete review of the qualification system and explains the task book process for documenting performance and certifying personnel. Agency personnel assigned to prescribed fire operations will meet the minimum NWCG qualifications, and any additional agency specific qualifications required, even when assisting other agencies. The IQCS does not separate prescribed fire qualifications by fuel group. The local units are responsible for ensuring that Prescribed Fire Burn Boss (RXB1 and 2) qualifications and training are appropriate for the fuel groups(s) that they will be working in. If the Prescribed Fire Burn Boss is not qualified as an IC, a qualified IC will be identified in the Escaped Fire Plan. Additionally, the transition from the Prescribed Fire Burn Boss to the IC needs to be explained.

- a. **BLM – Prescribed Fire Burn Boss 3 (RXB3):** *As a supplement to the qualifications system, the BLM has identified this position. This position supervises prescribed fire operations that are of “low complexity.” These types of operations typically would have few personnel assigned, have a very low threat of escape, and present a minimal risk to the people involved in the operation. Examples include burning piled slash, burning landings, ditch burning, debris burning, and broadcast burns of less than one acre with a minimal chance for escape. This position is supported by the IQCS. The activity area is BL and the position code is RXB3. Managers will need to check the requirements individually, since IQCS will not check them automatically.*
- b. **Physical Fitness:** Physical fitness levels are not established by the NWCG. The agencies have established physical fitness levels.
 - 1) *Refer to agency specific direction*
 - 2) **USFS** - *Refer to FSH 5109.17 for agency specific direction.*
 - 3) **BLM** – *Refer to BLM IM OF&A No. 2002-027.*
- c. **Currency Requirements:** The *Wildland and Prescribed Fire Qualification System Guide* sets currency requirements at five years, the same as for suppression qualifications.

I. Prescribed Fire Monitoring

A monitoring plan is required as part of each Prescribed Fire Plan. It describes what data will be collected, when it will be collected, where on the prescribed fire site it will be collected, which methods will be used for each data element, and list the responsible person(s). The requirements for prescribed fire monitoring are found in the agency specific policies:

Refer to agency specific direction.

J. Project Financing/Cooperation & Assistance

Funding for the implementation of prescribed fire projects must be identified and agreed to at the local unit office level. It is the responsibility of each program area (non-fire) to cover its own regular (base-eight) salaries and fixed costs. This applies to items such as preliminary site assessments, writing environmental assessments, developing Prescribed Fire Plans, obtaining clearances, training, and monitoring.

1. Federal Agencies Assistance

The FY02 Department of the Interior Wildland Fire Management Appropriation funded the five federal agencies Hazardous Fuels Reduction Programs. Funding was provided for the regular Hazardous Fuels Program and for Wildland Urban Interface Fuels. The Congressional intent for the fuels management program is that, "Interior Agencies and Forest Service should not charge each other for personnel and other resources."

All federal agency fire directors concur that the general policy of not cross billing is appropriate and meets the Congressional intent. Fuels management projects are considered regular planned land management activities as opposed to emergency activities; therefore, offices have the right to turn down requests from other offices to assist in fuels management activities. Offices should not consider providing personnel and resources at the expense of their own target accomplishments, and no office should be placed in a position of subsidizing another office's fuels management activities.

- a. Refer to agency specific direction.
- b. **BLM** – Refer to *BLM Fiscal Fund Coding Handbook* for agency specific direction.
- c. Current policy is that hazard pay will not be paid for any prescribed fire.

1. Contractors

Agencies can contract to conduct all or part of the prescribed fire operations and/or all or part of mechanical treatments for "Hazard Fuel Reduction" projects.

If a contractor is actively involved in igniting, holding, or mopping up an agency prescribed fire, a Contracting Officer's Authorized Representative (COAR) or Project Inspector (PI) will be on the site (exceptions can be made for late stage mopup and patrol) to ensure that the burn objectives are being met and that the terms of the contract are adhered to. The agency representative (COAR or PI) must have prescribed fire and/or wildfire qualifications equal to what the agency would require if an agency Prescribed Fire Burn Boss were conducting the actual operation.

2. Casual Firefighter Hire Authority

The DOI has been granted the authority to hire personnel under the pay plan for emergency workers for "fire use" work related to hazardous fuel reduction projects. The term of hire is restricted to no greater than 300 hours per year per person for emergency hazardous fuel reduction work.

3. Complete guidance for the use of this authority can be found in Chapter 20, Administration.

- a. Refer to agency specific direction.
- b. *USFS – Forest Service has no authority for AD hiring plan to be used in Hazardous Fuel projects.*

K. Escaped Prescribed Fires

1. Definition

BLM- *A prescribed fire becomes a wildland fire when the Prescribed Fire Burn Boss determines that an escape has, or is likely to occur. Fire outside of the planned perimeter, or outside any planned "Buffer or Allowable Areas," that cannot be contained with the holding forces identified in the Prescribed Fire Plan, is an escaped fire and will be declared a wildland fire. This is not fire that crosses the fireline which can be contained by resources on-site (no suppression charges will be used). If fire suppression funds are used to contain a prescribed fire, it must be declared an escaped fire. Once a prescribed fire becomes a wildland fire it cannot be returned to prescribed fire status.*

FWS- *Prescribed fires which exceed the limits of an approved prescription will be managed as unwanted wildland fires and handled under appropriate management response(s) as defined in the contingency section of the Prescribed Fire Plan or by the Wild Land Fire Situation Analysis. Once a prescribed fire has been declared an unwanted wildland fire, a Wildland Fire Situation analysis will be completed to determine the appropriate management action. Once a prescribed fire has been reclassified as an unwanted wildland fire it cannot revert back to a prescribed fire status.*

2. Actions

When a prescribed fire is declared a wildland fire, managers still have the full range of suppression options available under the concept of the “Appropriate Management Response.” If a prescribed fire is declared a wildfire, an agency specific “Fire Number” will be assigned and all suppression costs will be charged to it.

The following actions will be taken on all prescribed fires that escape and are declared wildland fires:

- a. Take prompt and reasonable action to control and suppress the fire. This could include the development of a WFSA.
- b. Notify the agency administrator responsible for the area.
- c. Notify the other agency administrator(s), and/or other landowners that may be affected, of the escaped fire. Coordinate suppression actions with the other affected parties.
- d. Document the time and environmental conditions that existed when the escape occurred.
- e. Document the incident, including all actions prior to and after the escape. Set up a file that includes all pertinent information, i.e., the Prescribed Fire Plan, a chronology of events including the prescribed fire report and unit logs or individual statements, the fire investigation report, weather forecasts including any spot forecasts, Remote Automated Weather Station (RAWS) data and National Fire Danger Rating System (NFDRS) data for the day of the escape for the nearest weather stations, photos, and any appraisal of damages.

3. Reviews

Escaped Prescribed Fire: Escaped prescribed fires will receive an administrative review. The level and scope of the review will be determined by the injuries, damage, and cost associated with the escape.

A prescribed fire that escapes and requires an expenditure of suppression funds or results in property damage, injuries, or fatalities will be investigated. The following guidelines apply to escaped prescribed fire reviews:

- a. Refer to agency specific direction.
- b. **BLM** – Refer to BLM IM OF&A No. 2002-027.
- c. **BLM – Fire Management Officer** – The FMO is required to make an investigation of escaped prescribed fires either personally or through an appropriate designated investigator.
- d. **Field Office Manager** – The field office manager has the responsibility for ensuring adequate and proper investigation of all escaped prescribed fires that result in personal injuries, burn onto private or other agency land, or requiring expenditures of up to \$50,000 for suppression and/or damage to property. The

field office manager may appoint an investigation team or request that one be appointed.

The field office manager will notify the State Director of escaped prescribed fires meeting the above criteria within 24 hours. Copies of the completed review report will be sent to the State Director, SFMO and to the Director, Office of Fire and Aviation.

- e. **BLM-State Director** – *State Directors have the responsibility for ensuring adequate proper investigation of all prescribed fire escapes resulting in serious or multiple personal injuries, significant burned area on private or other agency lands, or have an estimated expenditure of from \$50,000 to \$100,000 for suppression and/or property damage.*

The State Director will notify the Director, Office of Fire and Aviation, of escaped prescribed fires meeting the above criteria within 24 hours. Copies of the completed review report will be sent to the Director, Office of Fire and Aviation. The Director is responsible for ensuring adequate and proper investigation of all prescribed fire escapes resulting in fatalities, injuries to people not involved in the prescribed fire operation, fire shelter deployment(s), a major transportation route closure, smoke significantly impacting a major population center or causing a public health concern, or where suppression expenditures and/or property damage will exceed \$100,000.

- f. **BLM**–*The documentation required for a review are those listed below. A review team will be provided with all of the original documents related to the incident.*
 - 1) *Those items listed under (Actions) above*
 - 2) *The Prescribed Fire Plan and all attachments*
 - 3) *Documents pertaining to the qualifications and experience of the Prescribed Fire Burn Boss, Ignition Specialist, Holding Specialist, and other key overhead. This would include Red Cards, training and experience records, and Position Task Book*
 - 4) *Dispatch logs, radio logs, and any aviation records or logs*
- g. **USFS** – *Refer to FSM 5190 for agency specific direction.*

L. Prescribe Fire Program Review

1. Refer to Agency Specific Direction.

- a. **BLM-Fuels Management/Community Protection and Assistance Program Review:** *National Fuels Management/Community Protection and Assistance Program Reviews are conducted annually. The purpose of these reviews*

is to evaluate the states' programs against established standards, identify deficiencies, develop corrective actions, and to make recommendations designed to enhance or improve the program.

The reviews consist of several major elements, of which safety is the primary concern. These elements include:

- 1) Management Direction and Considerations*
- 2) Organization and Staffing*
- 3) Community Assistance*
- 4) Planning*
- 5) NEPA*
- 6) Budget*
- 7) Business Practices*
- 8) Reporting*
- 9) Risk Assessment and Mitigation Plans*
- 10) Training and Qualifications*
- 11) Safety*
- 12) Fuels Treatment Procedures and Practices*
- 13) Record Keeping*

BLM- *Review teams will include national fuels/community protection and assistance program lead, agency administrator, fire manager, program analyst, safety, fuels and mitigation technical specialist. (Other technical specialists as required, i.e., contracting, resource specialist, etc.) Expertise should be gathered from diverse backgrounds, and should include cooperators.*